

Message Text

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STR-08 AID-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02

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AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

UDTC/AMEMBASSY LONDON 7060

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION USNTO

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C O N F I D E N T I A L OECD PARIS 32515

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: ENRG, OECD

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION OF ENERGY ACTION GROUP PROPOSAL A
DECEMBER 19 MEETING OF OECD OIL COMMITTEE'S HIGH-LEVEL
GROUP

1. SUMMARY. THERE WAS A STRONG CONSENSUS AT THE HLG
IN FAVOR OF PROCEEDING WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN
ENERGY ACTION GROUP. THE MAJORITY OF TH MEMBERS ARE
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LEANING TOWARD THE OECD AS A VEHICLE FOR THIS PURPOSE.

THE UK DELEGATE AND SEVERAL OTHERS SAW THE LINK WITH THE OECD AS A WAY OF ACHIEVING CONSISTENCY BETWEEN THE EAG PROPOSAL AND THE COPENHAGEN SUMMIT DECLARATION ON ENERGY. END SUMMARY.

2. THE MAIN ITEM OF INTEREST AT THE HLG MEETING WAS SECRETARY KISSINGER'S ENERGY ACTION GROUP PROPOSAL. THE US DELEGATE (J. KATZ) WAS ASKED MANY QUESTIONS ABOUT ITS IMPLICATIONS AND DETAILS. HE RESPONDED IN ESSENCE THAT THE PROPOSAL WAS COINED IN GENERAL TERMS INTENTIONALLY; THE US WISHED TO EXPLORE WITH OTHER COUNTRIES HOW BEST TO FILL IN THE DETAILS WITH RESPECT TO SUBSTANCE AS WELL AS PROCEDURE.

3. IN A ROUND TABLE PRESENTATION OF VIEWS, THE EAG PROPOSAL WAS STRONGLY SUPPORTED AS AN IMAGINATIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE INITIATIVE BY THE DELEGATES OF THE UK, GERMANY, ITALY, CANADA, THE NETHERLANDS, NORWAY AND THE EC COMMISSION. THE COMMENTS OF THE FRENCH DELEGATE WERE BRIEF AND NONCOMMITTAL, THOUGH THEY IMPLIED THAT ACTION TO IMPLEMENT THE PROPOSAL WOULD GO FORWARD. THE JAPANESE DELEGATE WELCOMED THE PROPOSAL BUT INDICATED THAT JAPAN'S FINAL VIEW MIGHT BE DETERMINED BY THE REACTION OF OIL PRODUCING COUNTRIES.

4. THE REACTION OF THE BRITISH DELEGATE (SPAIN) WAS THE MOST COMPLETE. WHILE HE VERY WARMLY WELCOMED THE PROPOSAL FOR AN EAG, HE STRESSED THAT IT WAS CLEARLY RELATED TO THE COPENHAGEN SUMMIT DECLARATION ON ENERGY, WHICH PROVIDES A MANDATE TO THE COUNTRIES TO CONTINUE DISCUSSIONS WITH OTHER CONSUMING COUNTRIES WITHIN THE OECD. THUS, HE SAID, HE WOULD WELCOME A PROPOSAL BY THE OECD SECRETARY GENERAL ON THE WAYS IN WHICH RAPID PROGRESS COULD BE MADE IN DEVELOPING THE US PROPOSAL, KEEPING IN MIND THE NEED FOR STARTING OFF WITH A SMALL GROUP WITH SUFFICIENT FLEXIBILITY TO AVOID BEING BOGGED DOWN IN PROCEDURE. (SPAIN LATER TOLD THE US DELEGATE PRIVATELY THAT HE HAD INSISTED ON THE CONNECTION WITH OECD BECAUSE THE FRENCH HAD MADE IT CLEAR AT COPENHAGEN AND AFTERWARDS THAT THIS WAS ESSENTIAL FOR THEM.)
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5. THE SUGGESTION THAT THE COPENHAGEN DECLARATION SHOULD BE RECONCILED WITH THE EAG PROPOSAL THROUGH APPROPRIATE ACTION IN THE OECD WAS ECHOED BY GERMANY AND ITALY. IN A SOMEWHAT CRYPTIC STATEMENT, THE FRENCH DELEGATE (PICKETTY) STATED THAT THE EAG PROPOSAL MUST BE LOOKED AT IN THE LIGHT OF THE COPENHAGEN DECLARATION BUT MERELY ADDED THAT IN THE DEVELOPMENT

OF THE EAG MATTERS OF FORM OUGHT NOT TO BE OF TOO MUCH CONCERN.

6. THE CHAIRMAN (WANSINK) SUMMED UP BY STATING THAT IN THE GENERAL VIEW THE OECD COULD PROVIDE A USEFUL VEHICLE FOR AN EAG. HE NOTED THAT THERE HAD BEEN PROBLEMS IN THE PAST IN THE OECD IN ACHIEVING AGREEMENT ON RESTRICTED GROUPS. DEPUTY SECGEN ELDIN REPLID THAT RESTRICTED GROUPS COULD BE AND HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED IN SEVERAL DIFFERENT WAYS IN THE OECD. HE SAID HE THOUGHT THE MOST FRUITFUL PATH TO EXPLORE IN THIS CASE MIGHT BE ACTION BY THE SECGEN ON HIS OWN RESONSIBILITY.

7. AFTER THE HLG MEETING, ELDIN GAVE A LUNCH FOR THE SENIOR MEMBER OF EACH HLG DELEGATION. THE PARTICIPANTS SHOWED GREAT INTEREST ON A PERSONAL BASIS IN THE EAG PROPOSAL AND CONTINUED PRIVATELY TO SEE ADDITIONAL DETAIL. MOST OF THEM INDICATED THEY WERE LEANING TOWARD OECD AS THE FORUM FOR LAUNCHING THE EAG. THEY BELIEVE THAT THE OECD STRUCTURES AND PROCEDURES ARE SUFFICIENTLY FLEXIBLE TO PERMIT GOVERNMENTS TO GET THE JOB DONE IN THE WAY UPON WHIH THEY AGREE. THIS COULD INCLUDE ESTABLISHING A JOINT RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PRODUCING COUNTRIES. IT WAS POINTED OUT THAT OECD COULD SERVE AS A LIAISON WITH OPEC, OR CONCEIVABLY OIL PRODUCERS COULD E INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN CERTAIN OECD MEETINGS.
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